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THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
DEPARTMENT OF CHEMISTRY
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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Bureau of Agricultural Economics
Washington

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FOREIGN NEWS ON APPLES

CONDITION OF AMERICAN APPLES ON HAMBURG MARKET DURING OCTOBER

The following report, dated November 10, on the condition of the American apples offered on the Hamburg market during the month of October, has just been received in the Foreign Service of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics from Mr. Edwin Smith, the Department's Fruit Specialist in Europe.

The strength of the German market for American apples during the month of October has been evidenced by the prices which the German trade has been paying for fruit that has not been in satisfactory merchandising condition. With particular reference to the apples offered on the Hamburg auction on Thursday, November 8, it was astonishing to find fruit arriving in such deplorable condition at that time of the year. Although 53,000 boxes and 22,000 barrels of American apples were offered a/ for sale in Hamburg on that date the market reacted fairly well considering the fact that the fruit was not in first class condition and also that arrivals of overripe apples during the preceding week had been heavy.

An inspection of the barreled stock available for the November 8 auction left the impression that practically no lots arrived in good condition. Ben Davis were so soft that one's thumb could be pushed right into the flesh; Staymans were dull and black and York Imperials had a decidedly dull and pale appearance. A large percentage of the barreled stock arrived slack. Many decayed specimens were in evidence and in other instances heavy pressing had resulted in decomposed patches of deep black flesh. The barreled stock for that particular sale if offered in British markets would have brought only from \$3.41 to \$4.38 per barrel. The Hamburg market, however, showed good competition for practically all lots offered and the fruit had to be very bad to sell below \$4.87 per barrel. In fact the best, which was none too good, sold readily at from \$6.33 to \$6.81 per barrel.

The inspection of the boxed lots revealed that Washington Jonathans were all overripe, most carloads showing fruit with soft, watery bruises partially turned to decay. Even the Rome Beautys contained many apples that were breaking down, some at bruises and others throughout the flesh at one side. It seemed surprising that the boxed Jonathans did not sell for better prices considering the prices paid for the barreled stock.

a/ These figures take the place of those given in Foreign Service release on Apples, Number 196, dated November 10, 1928.

However, the Hamburg market was already overloaded with Jonathans. Extra Fancy Jonathans, sizes 138/163, brought from \$1.70 to \$2.43 per box. Had the fruit been sounder the market should have been from 24 cents to 48 cents higher.

The German as well as the Holland trade has been making heavy purchases of boxed apples this season. Such low prices as prevailed for boxed stock on November 8 were discouraging. The prices paid on that date for barreled apples, however, has proven to be a heartening factor since it showed that the country wanted sound apples. Great expectations are therefore placed on the results of the sales of the shipments now en route via the Panama Canal, providing they arrive in sound condition. In the meantime the low retail prices of Jonathans are speeding up consumption. Boxed apples are selling retail for 10 cents to 12 cents per pound, which is lower than they have sold in years.

These conditions, however, do not make recompense for the actual waste through decay suffered by those owning the fruit. This waste was caused largely by excessive heat. The attention of shippers in the United States, and particularly of those on the Atlantic Coast, is therefore once more directed to the fact that heat is still one of the greatest causes of loss. Unlike the problems offered by such enemies as the codling moth, apple scab, or cedar rust, the problem of heat has received but little organized attention and until shippers unite to combat it effectively they will have to put up with serious inroads into their annual profits.

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